4/29/71

Dear Mr. Durkin,

I appreciate the advance copy of Kaplan's latest venture into the literary bordellos. It is, in my view, such dishonesties, such abdications from the concepts and standards of the law, which he practises, that require the kind of writing I do. When the other organs of society fail, who remains but the writer?

The other reviews are duplicates, but I can use them and I do thank you. Elmer Gertz, who I know well and has failed to respond to my letter, is hung up because he was Ruby's lawyer and I suggested to one of the Texas counsel, after Bellie ignored it, the approach that did win reversal. I have challenged Barkham to a confrontation of his writing, mine, or any combination of his chosing, under any arrangements he makes. Needless to say, he has been silent. These are the literary night-sneaks who never confront, knowing better than they write and knowing themselves, their motives and their ignorance only too well. I'll read the Lukas with interest when I've time.

As to your 4/28, this is the kind of hasty error to which we are all, in some degree, susceptible but to which you seem to have a special weakness, no doubt because your politics blind you to what you do not want to see. This cannot explain your earlier, really dishonest writing. You libelled me, even under the new and permissive standards, and you knew better because I had taken the time to write the truth to you much earlier. Some day this can ruin you. You may run accross a vindictive man who will take after you, and then nobody will touch you or your writing. While you are young, you'd best try and take yourself in hand. Besides, do you really want to hurt people, per se?

Stanley Ross is one of the myriads with political preconceptions, all of which I know in this case of the right, who flooded the poor FBI with more false stories than anyone could imagine about the JFK assassination. I recall two of his, both thoroughly disproved, neither credible on the face of it. One involved a sick Cuban with a sad but long history of violence. That picture suggested him, although I've not looked at his picture in five years, so my recall can be faulty. You do not give me the history of the one you sent, which is your affair.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg